What Is Self-sufficiency ?

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(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)
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A CHALLENGE TO SARVODAYA PHILOSOPHY

On 12th March, 1950, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, addressing the annual session of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce, is reported to have said :

> " You deal with human beings of flesh and blood ; and these human beings have not only flesh and blood but have got rather excitable minds and passions today. So it is in that context that you should view these things, whether it is in the industrial or labour or any other field.
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> " A Government has to deal with that human material and not only benefit it but make it appreciate that, and what is even more important, make it participate in the doing of that work.
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> " The odd thing is that it will only benefit the people if they benefit themselves. You cannot benefit them by giving them doles. We want greater production and there are people who are unemployed, doing nothing. On the face of it this is illogical. A person who is unemployed should produce somewhere because he is a consumer anyhow. You may say you have not got enough machines. That is all right. But here, as elsewhere, one little fact which Gandhiji stressed comes in. The person who is unemployed may not have a big or small machine to work, but in the proper scheme of things, he can always do some productive effort by himself or in a group in his village or wherever he may be. The economist will tell you that this man's work is not very little, because that work multiplied by a million becomes very big.
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> " So however rapid our industrialization may be, I just do not see how it is going to absorb our hundreds of millions. We may have twenty, thirty or even more millions employed in an industry, but still what about the others ? Unless you make the others do something in the nature of cottage or small-scale or co-operative industries, you merely are not getting anything out of them or not enough out of them."
> (*Hindustan Times*, 13-3-'50)

This is a very important idea and is expressed in the manner, an exponent of the *Sarvodaya* philosophy would wish. But unfortunately it appears that not only there was no deliberation on this part of Panditji's speech, but on the contrary, the main idea of his speech was immediately rejected by Shri Ghanashyamdas Birla in the course of moving a resolution. He said :

> " It was only through the modern machine that full employment and prosperity could be created. Of course the *charkha* and the '*Sarvodaya* philosophy' could also create full employment, but what would be the standard of wages, if the people took to the *charkha* ? Not more than four annas a day and even that was *very doubtful.*" (*Times of India*, 14-3-'50).

Never before have I seen the *Sarvodaya* philosophy refuted in so few words as these.

However, even Birlaji admitted that the *Sarvodaya* philosophy possessed the capacity of creating full employment. But if the judgment which he has passed on that scheme of life, were right, the *Sarvodaya* philosophy would create conditions not for earning livelihood, but for earning the nation's death. This is what his criticism comes to, and has, perhaps, been also meant so.

Bapu used to call *charkha* the Sun, around which Agriculture, Cow-protection, Village industries revolved as planets. Having been a close associate of Gandhiji, Birlaji is fully conversant with Gandhiji's ideology. He has thus rightly integrated *charkha* with the *Sarvodaya* philosophy. But, in refuting the *Sarvodaya* philosophy, he has attacked the *charkha* in particular. This method made the task of refutation easy, but not such as to give proper justice to the philosophy of *Sarvodaya* as a whole.

Incidentally I may point out that the women spinners of our centres get not the 'very doubtful' four annas, but the *definite eight* annas. But since money has no stable value, it is wrong to assess the value of labour in terms of money. Such a method of evaluating labour is unscientific. The other day some one asked me : "Can the *charkha* earn a full day's meal ? " I said : " It can earn neither a full day's meal nor an insufficient meal. A meal requires corn, vegetables, milk and fruits. The *charkha* can produce cloth. And for doing so, it asks for only a small part of daily labour. Moreover, it is able to utilize not merely the labour of what the economist calls the efficient worker, but also of the inefficient worker. I have called the *charkha* *Vastra-purna Devi* (the goddess of cloth) just as the land is called *Anna-purna Devi* (the goddess of food). When I say that the *charkha* is the goddess of cloth, I do so with the full knowledge

of the existence of the mill. The latter is not the goddess of cloth. For, while, before the war, the mills produced 17 sq. yards per capita, now they can produce only 11 sq. yards, despite the fact that so much capital, technical knowledge, and business skill are expended upon them. I boldly claim that such is not the miserable condition of the *charkha*.

But when Agriculture, Cow-protection, Village Industries, Village Cleanliness, Nature-cure and Nai Talim are integrated with the *charkha*, an all-comprehensive life emerges therefrom. Indifference to them will land India into nothing but difficulties. Today more than 64 per cent. of the public revenue is spent on military defence. The hostile relations of India and Pakistan are held responsible for it. Even after the Indo-Pakistan problem is settled, so long as village economy is not accepted and implemented into practice, other similar problems will arise, with the result that Government will have to concentrate on the military strength in the same manner as other nations do. It should, therefore, be fully realized that it is only the *Sarvodaya* philosophy which will create conditions of Life, while all others, of Death.

Wardha, 3-4-50 VINOBA

(Translated from the *Sarvodaya*, April, 1950)

INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE AND GOODWILL

The Vedic Period

III

"The English in America exterminated one race, the Red Indians, almost completely, and imported another race, the Negroes, as slaves, on whom they inflicted unspeakable brutalities. The English in Australia carried extermination even further than in America. They accomplished a good deal of it by the simple use of arsenic, though there were other ways, more horrible and straightforward, which the Australians themselves have chronicled" (*The English* reprinted from the *Times Literary Supplement*, August 7, 1948).

British Book News, "a monthly guide to books published in the Commonwealth and Empire" (National Book League, London) in its issue of February 1949, published a notice of a book entitled *Black War : the Extermination of the Tasmanian Aborigines* by Clive Turnbull (*Cheshire, Melbourne*) and said, "The aboriginal race of Tasmania...became extinct within the short space of seventy-five years from the first white settlement in 1803".

Picture Post of November 6, 1948 (p. 16) informs us that at present there are only 400 descendants of the Carib race which Columbus found 456 years ago.

Lord Olivier in his preface to *Africa Slave or Free* ? by John H. Harris (S. C. M. 1919) mentions "that most ancient artistic race of the Western World, the Bushmen, whose residue was destroyed by South African white men."

Harris (*Op. cit.* p. 59) says, "The white races have done to death millions upon millions of these [the Negroes], the most relatively harmless but intensely interesting members of the human race." He calls gold "the scarlet woman" of the modern financial world which has ruined more men than any other African commodity. For its sake rivers of blood have flown, while the gaunt spectres in the phthisis hospitals of Johannesburg tell today their own horrible story of the price those must pay who pit blast and mine a mile below the earth's surface for the precious yellow ore". (p. 43).

In the Congo the native was deprived of his wife and exposed to the inclemencies of the weather and the attacks of wild beasts in order that he might collect rubber for the whites (Harris, p. 84). He was chained, imprisoned and flogged, while his women were outraged and his children too were chained and imprisoned if old enough ; if not, they were clubbed to death or their throats were cut.

Our last witness will be the great missionary, Albert Schweitzer, who wrote in *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest* (p. 91), 'Of the fact that a great part of the labour entailed upon a doctor in the tropics consists in combating various diseases, each one more loathsome than the last, which have been brought to these children of nature by Europeans, I can here only hint. But what an amount of misery is hidden behind the hint!'

'Ever since the world's far-off lands were discovered, what has been the conduct of the white peoples to the coloured ones ? What is the meaning of the simple fact that this and that people have died out, the others are dying out, and that the condition of others is getting worse and worse, as the result of their discovery by men who professed to be followers of Jesus? Who can describe the injustice and the cruelties that in the course of centuries they have suffered at the hands of Europeans ? Who can measure the misery produced among them by the fiery drinks and the hideous diseases that we have taken to them ?........We and our civilization are burdened with a great debt. We are not free to confer benefits on these men or not, as we please ; it is our duty. Anything we give them is not benevolence but atonement. For every one who scattered injury someone ought to go out to take help, and when we have done all that is in our power, we shall not have atoned for one thousandth part of our guilt.' (Quoted in the *Vegetarian Messenger*, April 1949, p. 75).

V. G. D.

SANITARY HABITS AND CONVENIENCES

[Shri S. K. Patil, the Mayor of Bombay, has been lately carrying on a campaign against the uncivic habits of the citizens of Bombay. In the following leaflet, Shri P. Kodandarao draws attention to some of the less talked of, yet very important, items of these habits.

I am unable to endorse Shri Kodandarao's recommendation of the toilet paper. It is unworkable and of doubtful value. A part of the uncleanliness of Indian style lavatories of railway coaches is due to want of pre-thought and precise instructions about the position of the taps provided near the seat as also on the wash-basin.

Shri Kodandarao has given more thought to the conveniences of the Western and westernized travellers. In the first place, they are very costly and secondly, they are hardly commendable for their intrinsic worth. While these may be made available where possible, the methods to be employed for the crores of India must be thought out in an original manner. —K. G. M.]

The *Hindu* of Madras did a good turn when it published on the 1st March 1950 its second leader on "A Truce to Spitting", a much needed plea. There is, however, yet another and perhaps more important topic which hardly receives due attention because many sensitive people are too squeamish to write or speak about it in polite society. The sanitary habits of most of our people, and the sanitary conveniences in India need reform.

Homes: In many of our homes, the bath-room, where we bathe is often used for another purpose. And a mighty stinking place it is, because of the uneven and absorbent character of its floor and walls. No amount of cleansing with phenyle-water will effectively quench the stink. When there is no flush arrangement, it is desirable that the liquid excretion should be collected in non-absorbent containers of enamel or porcelain and subsequently disposed off at a safe distance.

Public Places: It is not an uncommon sight even in cities to find children, under the abetting eyes of their parents, committing nuisance, minor or major, in public streets, not to speak of lanes, even when their houses are provided with latrines. It is not uncommon to find even adults, not only men but also women, committing nuisance by the roadside and along railway approaches to cities, an inelegant habit to which Mr S. K. Chettur, I.C.S., with commendable but unusual courage, drew pointed attention in one of his articles to the press. There are Municipal and police regulations to prohibit this practice, but they are not effectively enforced, partly because no adequate sanitary conveniences have been provided in and near cities, much less in villages, and partly because people are so used to it that they are not ashamed of it.

Railways: In railway trains it is painful for sensitive people, particularly those who have known better and modern ways, to use the bath-rooms even in Second and First class coaches if they have been used already by some other passengers. They are wet, slushy and stinking. The so-called "European" type of raised convenience is meant to be sat-on as on a chair and not to be stood-by or squatted-on. If used standing or squatting, it is difficult to avoid soiling the polished wooden seat, even when the train is stationary, not to speak of its being in motion. The least that should be done is to lift the seat if and when the convenience is used standing.

An increasing number of railway coaches are being provided with the "Indian" type of convenience. But it is difficult to keep even such bath-rooms clean and dry when water is used for cleansing. In the absence of a better alternative, it seems best to use toilet paper.

Railways may well put up posters in bath-rooms at stations and in railway coaches to depict the right and wrong ways of using bath-room conveniences, since neither homes nor schools offer such education.

Bus Routes: Sanitary conveniences along bus-routes in or between towns are largely non-existent. Passengers are obliged, some much to their shame and disgust, to use the roadside where the bus chooses to stop, may be in the midst of a village or a town. Men, and particularly women, who have known better and modern ways, suffer a great deal because of lack of comfort stations. It is desirable that such stations should be located at convenient intervals, and kept clean. Every bus office should have such facilities. Buses should make it a point to stop at Travellers Bungalows and railway stations *en route*, which have bath-rooms, for the use of such passengers who wish to use them, and who, if necessary, will be willing to pay a small fee for such use.

Raising Sanitary Standards: An increasing number of Indians are getting used to modern and more decent sanitary habits, and suffer when they are obliged to revert to primitive ways. Further, India invites foreign tourists. Nothing will discourage such traffic more than the sanitary inconveniences provided in India. The prospect of a bus or train journey is deterrent to a degree. It is necessary to modernize the sanitary habits of the people and the sanitary facilities in India. And it is time to cast away all squeamishness and organize an effective campaign for this purpose.

P. KODANDARAO

Correction

Please read *December 1940* instead of *December 1949* in line 17 from the bottom on page 93, first column, in article "Now After Stadium" (*Harijan*, May 13, 1950).

HARIJAN

June 10 1950

WHAT IS SELF-SUFFICIENCY ?

The reader will find elsewhere Shri Vinoba's comments on Shri Ghanashyamdas Birla's recent criticism of the *Sarvodaya* philosophy under the caption: "A Challenge to Sarvodaya Philosophy". I understand that Shri Birla has held these views for several years, and he does not speak only for himself, but represents the views held by him in common with other industrialists. The *Eastern Economist* of New Delhi wrote in its issue of June 28, 1946 a criticism on "Khadi Economy". As they represented the views, more or less, of Shri Birla himself, he brought the article to the notice of Gandhiji. This led to an interview between Gandhiji and Dr. P. S. Lokanathan, the Editor. The discussion which took place at the interview was made by Dr. Lokanathan the subject of another article, "An Hour with Gandhiji", published in the same paper in its issue of September 13, 1946.

In the meantime Dr. Lokanathan's first article was replied to by Shri Krishnadas Gandhi, Secretary, A.I.S.A., in *Harijan* dated 8th September, 1946. It dealt with the statistical points raised by the *Eastern Economist.* Gandhiji's own interview discussed, besides these points, the philosophy of the *khadi* economy also, and it has, therefore, its own importance. The article is reproduced elsewhere with the permission of the Editor. It will be noticed that Shri Vinoba thinks and works on the same lines as Gandhiji.

Towards the end of "An Hour with Gandhiji", the Editor has raised a few doubts. It is to be regretted that he could not place these before Gandhiji himself, who would have answered them in his own telling manner. But as this is no longer possible, the answer must be attempted by others. Shri Vinoba has already answered it to a certain extent in his note. Let me supplement it.

The Editor is a well-known economist of our country. He says that he found little difficulty not merely in appreciating Gandhiji's economic philosophy, but even in aspiring to live up to it, but when he thought of the community he saw difficulties in accepting it. This is the usual predicament of intelligence wedded to orthodoxy, when it finds itself face to face with radical reform. In such cases my humble submission to a man of intelligence generally is that if he is personally able to accept a way of life as worth aspiring after, the only way to find solutions for probable difficulties is, first, to declare himself in its favour; secondly, not to propagate against it; and thirdly, to begin to practise it himself to the best of his ability and thus stand face to face with the problems presented by it. No reform in life, worth the name, can take place if it is not beset with difficulties. Even as tremendous technical and social problems have to be constantly faced in industrialization so will it be with the *Sarvodaya* life. They can be solved only if all intelligent men as well as the State, that are intelligently convinced that Gandhiji showed a way of life which is worth aspiring after, combine their strength and efforts together for the purpose. Men of ordinary parts and limited means might be excused if they say that they could join the ranks only if difficulties were removed and if the whole community did so. But if the highly educated and expert section of the people also adopt the same attitude, who will pave the way for the community? If an intelligent person says, I am prepared to associate with Harijans on equal terms, but my caste people will not tolerate it, and so I must wait till they do, can untouchability go? The issue has to be solved by every person convinced of the cause by putting it into active practice and courting difficulties.

Dr. Lokanathan refers to two difficulties in particular: (1) that the village-sufficiency scheme will leave no margins of reserves against an evil day; and (ii) that men and women will be over-burdened with work, and will not accept it.

On the first point, I am afraid that the learned Editor failed to remember what he himself had been pleased to discover in Gandhiji during his interview. In the first place, as was made clear by Gandhiji, the self-sufficiency idea has a special meaning. It may not be possible for even a great country like our own to be altogether self-sufficient, let alone a village or an individual. But, *normally*, a village must be self-sufficient so far as the *primary needs of healthy life* are concerned: i.e. food, clothing, houses, and a few other essential needs of life. I might also add that the word self-sufficient does not convey the *Sarvodaya* idea fully. Perhaps the proper word would be *fully-sufficient* to accord with the Indian word *swayampurna.* That is, self-sufficiency does not mean barely sufficient, or sufficient only unto the self, but fully and abundantly sufficient. It must produce the essential needs of life to the maximum extent possible, so that it can build not only reserves, but also possess surpluses for being either exchanged for its secondary needs or made available to such parts of the country as are unavoidably short of them. It will also produce abundantly things for which it is specially adapted, whether they are primary needs or secondary needs, provided they are not made an instrument of exploitation, and are not made a speciality at the cost of self-sufficiency in essentials. For instance, a village may produce cotton or jute, if the soil is particularly fitted for it, but it should not do so without first producing sufficient food for itself. It may make

artistic things of bamboo, but not for obtaining *cloth* in exchange for them. It may manufacture earthen vessels and crockery, but not exchange them for corrugated iron or asbestos sheets to build its own houses. If necessary it may purchase soap but not mill-pressed oil or *vanaspati*.

Secondly, village self-sufficiency must not be understood to stand for traditional methods of production only. Hitherto technical science has been poorly applied in the sphere of village life. If the current of technical knowledge is directed in this direction, there should be no reason for the apprehension that Gandhiji's economic philosophy might become a hand-to-mouth or sub-human way of life. Rather, I should think that there is no other way to bring prosperity to villages.

The second difficulty presented is whether this will not entail too much hard work to villagers, particularly women. This is not an altogether imaginary difficulty and requires to be carefully investigated. To do so here would make this article too long. So I defer the discussion to the next week.

Wardha, 30-5-'50 K. G. MASHRUWALA

AN HOUR WITH GANDHIJI

A leading article entitled "Khadi Economy" which appeared in the *Eastern Economist* of June 28, 1946 apparently attracted the attention of Gandhiji and resulted in an invitation to the Editor for a discussion with Gandhiji at the Bhangi Colony. The meeting came off on Thursday 5th September, and was, for me, a memorable event. It was not my first contact with him; for I had met him some years ago at Wardha where in company with other economists who had gathered for the All-India Economic Conference, I had the opportunity of putting a question or two and listening to his views on current issues. But that meeting was in no sense a personal one. On this occasion, however, I could see the Mahatma at close range and was able to get a peep into his mind as it opened itself out on a number of economic and social matters, for over an hour. It is no exaggeration to say that I returned after the interview with a fuller knowledge of what may be compendiously described as Gandhian Economics and a deeper appreciation of its essentials.

Perhaps the reader will follow our discussion better if I indicate here very briefly what the article in the *Eastern Economist* purported to say and also what it did not. The article did not argue that the 400 millions of India's population could not be clothed entirely with *khadi*; nor did it seek to decide upon the desirability or otherwise of such policy. Its object was a much more limited one. It was only designed to point out what in terms of man-power *khadi* production for the entire population involved. By a series of calculations and on certain assumptions it was shown that over seven crores of whole-time workers would be necessary if India is to depend upon *khadi* for its clothing, leaving only eleven crores of workers for every other kind of work including agriculture. As agriculture occupied the labour of 11 crores of workers there was practically no labour left for housing, manufacturing of millions of goods required for consumption, various kinds of service, etc. You can have *khadi* if you like, but you will not have enough workers for the thousands of other comforts which we seek.

There was no dispute as to the number of working hours required for spinning, weaving and all other intermediate processes. The All-India Spinners Association's calculations made in terms of spinning hours, bore out the figures of the *Eastern Economist*. But Gandhiji's main objection was lodged against the intended or unintended effects and implications of our argument based upon the method adopted in calculations. He confronted me by saying that no one had argued that spinning should be a whole time occupation for which a certain number of workers should be exclusively allotted. The entire case for *khadi*, according to Gandhiji, has been built upon the firm basis of spinning requiring only an hour's time of every available worker. Its beauty lay in the fact that even children under 15 (who, in my calculations, have been left out from the total number of the working population) and old persons above 50 or 55 could all devote themselves to it. Weaving and certain other intermediate processes after spinning might be a full time job, but spinning was designed definitely as spare-time work. Considering the fact that the agriculturists were unemployed for practically three to four months in the year and had surplus time during the rest of the year, it should not be difficult, indeed it is necessary, for people to engage themselves in a useful occupation; and hand-spinning provided just that facility. Again the idea of 8 hours a day, it might be legitimately argued, is all right when workers have to work under the trying and difficult machine-imposed conditions, but has no significance where people do spinning, as they do so many other things like cooking, etc., without imposition from above.

Hence calculations based on work under one set of conditions are inappropriate where the conditions of work are entirely different. If all the villagers would spin for one hour the quantity of yarn necessary for the entire country would be sufficient. But if people would not spin, that was, Gandhiji said, another matter. He had set before himself an ideal, and naturally practice would fall short of ideal. In fact an ideal would have ceased to be an ideal when accomplishment was perfect and new ideals will be set by men. He was only concerned to prove that *khadi* woven on handspun yarn was an entirely practicable proposition, provided people would do their work. Personally he was not content with 20 yards per head; he would like to give every one 40 yards. Gandhiji wants people to be well-dressed though not luxuriously dressed. The writer asked whether in that case there would be room for other kinds of village industries. It may be posssible to get all the yarn by hand-spinning. But if hand-pounding of rice is to be done, if paper is also to be made by hand, if other things too are to be made by hand, what would be the time left? Further, did he expect the village women working in the fields from morning to noon and having to cook and do other household duties find time willingly to do an hour of spinning? Gandhiji explained that one hour of spinning a day was only an average and he expected that women would make up by spinning longer hours during the offseason. As regards the former question he answered that he had not examined how many village industries could be whole-time occupations. He believed however that there would still be labour available for all essential village industries. In any case spinning was different from every other kind of occupation. We must also remove from our minds a misconception of his ideas in respect of hand labour. Thus he would seek to get as much paper made by hand as posssible, but would not prohibit machine-made paper, although he added humourously that three-quarters of the writing for which paper is required was wholly superfluous. But he was tolerant about it, being conscious of the fact, I suppose, that he was also a writer. Again, he frankly recognizes the need for industries but would socialize them and make them subserve wholly the welfare of the common people. It is a mistake to think that Gandhiji is entirely opposed to machines, and would destroy them completely, if he had the power. It was all a question of more or less, not one of nothing or everything. That was good to know, and I ventured to drive home the point by asking "Gandhiji, if you say as much as hand-labour

as possible, would you not also be content with as much of *khadi* as possible?" Quick came the reply "No." *Khadi* stands on a different footing from the rest. It was not mere material production of a particular kind. It was a livery of freedom, as Jawaharlal puts it, said he. Nay more, it was a matter of self-respect to the poor people of India as it should be to all. Gandhiji then let himself to go a little, and spoke of the history of cotton in India, and its being a symbol of our culture, civilization and skill, and one could see pride swelling in his heart as he referred to the retention of the skill even today which enabled the production of the best and finest varieties of *khadi*. After all, he asked, did not India clothe herself without machine-made cloth in those days and why not now, he argued. To my timid query, was not our population then a half or a third of what it is today and was not the quantity consumed also much less, Gandhiji answered, "Yes, that may be so"; but the hours of work were open to the extent of the increase in the number of people. It may be that the cost of the *khadi* might be more than that of mill-made cloth. But if this scheme of growing cotton by each in his own back garden is worked up, the cost could be greatly reduced.

The stage was now set for the exposition of his philosophy of life, of which *khadi* was the external manifestation. *Khadi* is something as personal and intimate to a rural family as home food is. Cities may or may not justifiably have hotels and restaurants, but the idea of a village restaurant wherefrom people would buy their food or at which they should go and eat seemed chimerical, if not also repugnant to him. Likewise, *khadi* should be a household affair. The villages should not have to depend upon the cities for their clothing. Again *khadi* stands for a way of living. If India is to go the American way, and seek to satisfy all its wants by pressing a button, so that ultimately even the use of God-given limbs becomes difficult or superfluous, well, he for one should regret it deeply. *Khadi* alone can avert that disaster. May be, that the people would aspire for more and more of the material things of life. He would rather do everything in his power to check the tendency to be wanting more and more.

I drew Gandhiji's attention to the obvious inconsistency of setting self-sufficiency and hand-labour as an ideal and at the same time taking for granted the use of motor-cars, aeroplanes, telephones and all the luxuries of a machine age. Even the supply of cheap power on which so much store is set by advocates of village industries cannot be had, unless generators, fans, lights and hundreds of equipments were either produced at home with the use of a machine or imported from abroad, in which case we should pay for them by our exports. I was glad I put this question because the answer that Gandhiji gave me came as an agreeable surprise. He said that he was only anxious that whatever could be done in the village without depending upon the cities should be undertaken. He did not rule out other things, if they could be had only by machinery. Unless I misunderstood him, he appeared to be more pragmatic in his approach to economic problems than we had given him credit for. Of course he held firmly to his ideal that the pattern of village economy should be based on simplicity and self-sufficiency and that villages should be able to supply *khadi* not only for themselves but for others as well.

Many other important and vital questions were referred to by him. He may be regarded as a capitalist, but does not conform to the type known to us, the sophisticated economists, who would bring capitalism under a rigid definition. According to him all capitalists are to be transformed into trustees for the nation. They would then use their talents plus their money mostly for the nation and incidentally for themselves by way of commission, as it were. The Zamindars too he would treat likewise. I said that this transformation of capitalists and Zamindars into trustees for the community, even if it could be brought about, would be a slow process, and that to leave it to individual conversion would be pedestrian and ineffective. He would not agree. Even if slow, it would be a surer method and more enduring. He would have the doctrine incorporated in law to which the capitalists and Zamindars would have to be parties. He is a Socialist, but quite different from the Marxian or any other type which has been evolved in the West. Any enforced compulsion is obviously repugnant to him, as for example, when he replied to my question regarding the compulsory feature of the Madras scheme of *khadi* production, he said that he had already intimated to the Madras Government that the principle of compulsion in that scheme was not merely unacceptable to him but would kill *khadi* in the long run. It is not necessary to refer to the various other matters which were also illumined by him in his inimitable way. Seventy minutes passed as if they were as many seconds. I felt a little flattered when taking leave of him he said he would see me again, if I wished. So, perhaps, the reader may have to bear with another article.

Now what is the upshot of this conversation from the point of view of the economics of *khadi*? I think that the debate is inconclusive and will necessarily be so; because the issue goes much beyond questions of supply, demand, price etc. with which alone the economist is concerned. To Gandhiji, as will be clear from the above account, life is the only thing that matters. Lifeless economics should be subordinated to or tested by the supreme consideration of the true welfare of mankind. The measuring rod of *khadi*, therefore, is not mere money, or wealth, as it is for many others. From the individual standpoint I find little difficulty not merely in appreciating Gandhiji's economic philosophy but even in aspiring to live up to it. But from the point of view of the community as a whole, the matter is slightly more complex and I see two difficulties in accepting it. One is that his philosophy of individual spinning, and village self-sufficiency will leave no margins of reserves of food, clothing, etc. A little calamity brought about by Nature or Man will be enough to upset this rudimentary structure and villagers may die in thousands for want of essential things. The second is that how few of the men and women for whom Gandhiji labours and pleads would willingly accept his views of work and life. What is the good of setting up an ideal which few are likely to accept? I cannot illustrate better than by recalling a very vivid incident which occurred when I was going in a bullock-cart in a village in South India some years ago. The cartman stopped on the way in front of his house, and took a bag of paddy and put it in the cart. I asked him: what for? He said he was taking it to the neighbouring rice-mill, for his wife had warned him that if he would not have it milled but insisted on its being husked and pounded at home, she would not only not cook food for him but threaten to leave him. She has enough trouble with having to cook and get water from the well and so on, without having to pound rice at home. That village woman is the genuine economist whom Gandhiji has to tackle and argue with; not academic economists who are obviously not qualified to be the arbiters in such matters. I expect Gandhiji will have something to say on those points too, if I succeed (as I hope) in snatching another hour or two of his valuable time.

P. S. LOKANATHAN

(From *Eastern Economist*, Sept. 13, 1946)

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STUDY OF LANGUAGES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Referring to my note "A Good Beginning" (*Harijan*, 30th April, 1950) a friend writes to the following effect :

> "The amendment you suggest does not mean that an S.S.C. examinee shall take Hindi as his second paper. If you intend to see that Hindi prospers, the condition should be that no examinee can take English for both the compulsory papers. And if you wish to see that the regional languages do not suffer at the hands of Hindi, you should also state that an examinee cannot select the same language for both these papers, but must choose the regional language as one of them."

While I appreciate the spirit behind this suggestion, I am unable to subscribe to it wholly. What I said in that note was that it was a good *beginning*, inasmuch as it enabled students to complete their secondary education without being compelled to study English, which is responsible for the wasteful and unnecessary 'Matric massacre'.

Let me put down in short what I believe to be necessary for secondary education in regard to the study of languages :

1. English should not be a compulsory subject.
2. Hindi must be a compulsory subject of study all through the secondary course. So also the regional language.
3. In addition to these two, there should be a third language paper. A student may take English or one of the Indian languages enumerated in Group I (ii), except that he cannot take his own regional language.
4. Then, there remains the question of Sanskrit, Pali, Ardha-magadhi, Arabic, i.e. ancient languages and of French, German, Russian, Chinese, Persian etc., i.e. modern European and Asian languages. They have been included in Group III. The study of this group is not compulsory. This is proper. But I believe the study of Sanskrit, to an extent and in a manner necessary and helpful for a sound study of languages like Gujarati, Marathi, Hindi, etc., is highly desirable. This may be achieved even as a part of the study of the regional languages.

I may draw attention to one more paper in the S.S.C.E. course, as it will help to appreciate the intentions of the framers of that course better. We saw that Group I and II subjects are compulsory. Group IV is also as follows :

> "Hindi (without Texts) — Optional for those only who take (1) General English of Group I."

This means that an examinee can take (1) English (without texts), (2) a regional language or additional English (with texts) or additional Hindi (with texts) and also, if he desires, (3) Hindi (without texts). This scheme enables a student to take two English papers only, or two Hindi papers only, or two English papers and general Hindi to the entire omission of the regional language. This is a defect which deserves to be remedied in the manner suggested above. To this extent my suggestions in the previous note stand amplified.

18-5-'50 M. P. DESAI

TEMPLE MADNESS

Some days ago, it was reported in the Press that a temple installing the images of Shri Kasturba and Gandhiji had been built in Banaras, the installation ceremony having been performed by a minister of the Uttar Pradesh.

In these days of economic and spiritual crisis, it is extremely distressing that even against the expressed wishes of Gandhiji, certain people are trying to erect *mandirs* with the installation of his images. If this tendency is allowed to continue, the practical side of Gandhism — chiefly the love and service of humanity — will be neglected and after a few decades we can well imagine that only some Gandhi temples will remain to tell posterity that he was a Divine being. His great expositions will perhaps be followed to the extent of putting them all in well-bound books to adorn libraries. The dogmatic religious heads will add his name among the *avatars*, and the masses will naturally think that the *avatar* is only to be worshipped as it is beyond human capacity to put his teachings into practice. Oh! then what an insult would it be to the memory of the greatest humanitarian of this age, who tried his best to practise all that he preached? Under the caption "A Temple to Gandhiji", Gandhiji himself wrote thus :

> "........The person who erected the temple has wasted his resources by misusing them, the villagers who are drawn there are misled and *I am being insulted that the whole of my life has been caricatured in that temple*. The meaning that I have given to worship is distorted..........A man is worshipped only to the extent that he is followed, not in his weaknesses but in his strength.........It would be a welcome relief if the owner of the temple removed the image and converted the building into a spinning centre where the poor will card and spin for wages and the others for sacrifice and all will be wearers of khaddar. *This will be the teaching of the Gita in action and true worship of it and me.*"
>
> (*Harijan*, 24-3-'46)

This temple-building madness must go. Gandhiji might have sung with the poet who says —

> "I have no temple and no creed,
> I celebrate no mystic rite;
> The human heart is all I need
> Wherein I worship day and night.
> The human heart is all I need
> For I have found God even there;
> Love is the one sufficient creed,
> And comradeship purest prayer."

R. CHIDAMBARESH

DIFFERING JUDGMENTS

The Supreme Court is the final Court of appeal for all judicial matters in India. Its personnel is very carefully chosen, so that its decisions may not only be binding, but command the respect of the country.

During the past few days, two full Benches of that Court have puzzled the public by pronouncing differing judgments on two important questions of law. I believe that the thumb rule of majority has put its stamp of finality so far as the particular litigants are concerned. But one does not feel happy to think that the highest tribunal of the country should be as not-one-minded as lay thinkers often are.

But human intellect is so subtle that when questions are particularly intricate and demand not only keen powers of reasoning but also absolute dispassionateness, the best intellects are often found to be incapable of coming to a unanimous decision. This had happened when the boundaries of the Punjab and Bengal had to be settled. The Indian and Pakistan judges were unable to come to an agreement, and the decision of the Umpire had to be taken and accepted. This was not a happy situation. The Umpire settled the boundaries, but he could not bring satisfaction to either party.

Of course, judges must have their freedom of conscience, and if they find that they honestly differ from one another, it cannot be helped and the fact has to be accepted. Nevertheless, it is a thing for regret.

Both the majority and the minority views cannot be correct. The majority brings an end to the litigation but is unable to give conviction of its correctness; and what is needed is both finality and correctness.

Is there no way out of this? Would it not be better when such a situation arises, if the judges defer the judgment for a time and thrash the matter out among themselves from every point of view until they arrive at the same conclusion? When intellects differ, it is not the logical faculty which is at fault, but the dispassionateness of the mind, and the ideas on basic principles of what constitutes equity and justice. Each judge must examine the basic principles and the dispassionateness of himself as well as that of his colleagues and frankly discuss these rather than the texts of laws. They must all proceed on the faith that under all the circumstances of the case there can be only one correct view and if their effort is earnest they would certainly agree to what it is. If the difficulty arises from the clumsy language of the law, they must decide what the principle of law should be and suggest to the legislatures to amend the law accordingly, and decide the case on principles of equity accepted by them in common. They should feel that when judgments differ, no decision can be confidently credited with being in accordance with justice, equity and good conscience. Is it too much to hope that the Supreme Court will find a way of arriving at unanimous conclusions?

Wardha, 30-5-'50 K. G. MASHRUWALA

NOTES

Training Class For Goshala Workers

At a meeting of the Managing Committee of the Bombay Provincial Federation of Goshalas and Panjrapoles held in Bombay on 9th May, 1950, it has been decided to start training classes for *goshala*-workers with two months' practical and theoretical training course at Poona from September, 1950 with Acharya Shankar Navathe as honorary *Sanchalak* aided by a sub-committee of Shri Parashuram Mhatre and Shri Jayantilal Mankar. The training will include elementary knowledge of animal husbandry, dairying, fodder-production, feeding of cattle, management of *goshalas* and first-aid treatment of common diseases and other allied subjects. The Committee has also resolved to start one *gosadan* for unproductive cattle near Surat, one in the Panchamahals and one in East Khandesh in co-operation with the *panjrapoles* at Surat, Ahmedabad and Jalgaon.

149, Shroff Bazar, Bombay 2

J. N. MANKAR
Hon. Secretary,
The Bombay Provincial Federation of Goshalas and Panjrapoles.

Mahilashram, Wardha

The new session of the Mahilashram classes will begin on the 21st June, 1950. It provides a five-year *Vinita* course for girls on *Nai Talim* lines. A limited number of scholarships are also offered. Applicants must have passed the fourth standard and must not be below eleven years of age. For details and a copy of the prospectus write to the undersigned. The last date for receiving applications is June 20.

ACHARYA,
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CONTENTS PAGE

A CHALLENGE TO SARVODAYA PHILOSOPHY ... VINOBA 129
INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE AND GOODWILL: THE VEDIC PERIOD — II ... V.G.D. 130
SANITARY HABITS AND CONVENIENCES ... P. KODANDARAO 131
WHAT IS SELF-SUFFICIENCY? ... K. G. MASHRUWALA 132
AN HOUR WITH GANDHIJI ... P. S. LOKANATHAN 133
STUDY OF LANGUAGES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS ... M. P. DESAI 135
TEMPLE MADNESS ... R. CHIDAMBARESH 135
DIFFERING JUDGMENTS ... K. G. MASHRUWALA 136
NOTES:
TRAINING CLASS FOR GOSHALA WORKERS ... J. N. MANKAR 136
MAHILASHRAM, WARDHA ... 136

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